red to by the airlines. It is not true that Boeing 737 aircraft are over-worked.

Return of Gold of Goans deposited with the Portuguse Bank

98. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present estimated value of gold ornaments desposited by a number of persons in Goa as security for loans with the Portuguese Bank and when they were deposited;

(b) what are the dates on which Government took steps to get back the said ornaments from Portugal and what steps were taken each time;

(c) what results have been achieved in this regard during the last twenty-six years; and

(d) whether Government have since received any official indication about the return of these ornaments and securities from the portuguse side, if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) The present value of the gold ornaments which were deposited with the Portugnese Bank before the liberation of Goa in 1961 is estimated at Rs 5.44h crores approximately.

(b) and (c) Government have been pursuing this matter vigorously since the signing of that Indo-Portugal Treaty on December 31, 1974. Over the years several demarches have been made to the Portugusee Government at various levels. An illustrative list of various demarches made since 1984 is given in the statement (see belers). A dra formulation of the agreement between the State Bank of India and Banco National Ultra marin was discussed in May 1984. Since then efforts are continuing to finalise this agreement.

(d) We have been assured from time to time, at the highest levels of the Portuguese Government, of their desire to resolve this issue at the earliest possible. Latest indications from the Portuguese side are positive. At the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of India and Portugal recently at the UN the assurance was repeated by the Portuguese side. However, we have not yet received any formal communication from the Portuguese Government agreeing to the modalities of signing an agreement which would result in the return of gold ornaments to the rightful owners or their legal heirs.

Statement

Illustrative list of Demarches made to the Portuguese Authorities since 1984

Ambassador of India to Portugal and other senior officers of Embassy of India in Lisbon approached the concerned Portuguese authorities on several occasions between October, 1984 and September, 1988. (1984) October; 1985; May and November; 1986: January, March, May, July, August, November and December: 1987: January, February, March, September; 1988: January, February, March, May, June, July, September).

State Bank of India approached the Banco Nacionale Ultramarinn on various occasions. (1984: May and October; 1985: December).

Ministry of External Affairs took up this matter with the Embassy of Portugal at New Delhi to find an early solution on a number of occasions. (1986: July; 1987 March; 1988: April, August and October).

The Portuguese authorities agreed to resolve this problem expeditiously on several occasions. (1984: October; 1986: January, May, August and November; 1987: June; 1988: May, June and September).